

Assessing the technical, professional and cultural resources in the State;
Examining the role played by private schools in the State, and of relations between public and private schools;

Evaluating programs for the prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of handicapping conditions, provisions for special education of the handicapped, and programs for neglected and delinquent children;

Examining existing State laws and regulations affecting education; and

Establishing procedures to preserve opportunities for innovation at the local level, to facilitate future modification of educational plans as new evidence on accomplishments is obtained, and to insure as far as possible the preservation of a system which is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of a rapidly developing technological society.

A number of recent activities supported by Title V of ESEA, and the development of several statewide systems designed to coordinate planning and supplementary programs under Title III of ESEA, provide indications that many States are increasingly assuming the major role in comprehensive planning.

Particularly encouraging are indications of the growing readiness of States to undertake cooperative activities with other States. For example, a cooperative project has been established under the leadership of Iowa, to develop and implement a complete integrated educational information system among 13 mid-western States. A development with similar implications is the establishment, in a large majority of States, of Research Coordinating Units, which include:

Coordinating occupational research activities conducted within the State, and, further, coordinating such research activities with those being conducted outside the State;

Identifying and maintaining an inventory of available occupational research and development resources in light of anticipated needs and programs within the State;

Surveying available data on employment opportunities, emerging occupational trends, and future job projections, as a base for planning vocational programs, curricula, and facilities within the State, and teacher training, recruitment and placement; and

Identifying issues and problems relating to the nature and place of vocational education in the State school system, and determining the contributions which occupational research and development could make in resolving them.

This legislation does not envision the development of anything which could be characterized as a national plan. It does anticipate that as States increase their capability for identifying problems and for pinpointing needs, there will emerge some fairly systematic procedures for comparing findings, for ascertaining the extent to which a national consensus exists on important issues of educational policy, and for assisting the States to develop increasingly more effective planning procedures.

If adopted this legislation would:

Encourage the collection and adequate analysis of far more precise and comprehensive information about the development of human resources than is now available;

Stimulate efforts to develop greater support for education at the State and local levels; and

Increase the visibility of accomplishments by individual school systems and encourage the spread of effective educational practices by encouraging healthy emulation, both within States and across State lines.

One of the functions of the planning and evaluation program would be to extend technical assistance and services to local educational agencies to assist them in evaluation of their present school program, the study of critical local educational needs, the assessment of the financial resources available to the school, the planning of new programs, and the coordination of Federal, State and local programs.

Some States may elect to give local educational agencies financial assistance to help the local school district in the establishment of a planning and evaluation system at the local level. It is expected that States in which there are large city school districts will prefer having the city school board carry out a program especially designed to deal with the problems of the cities.

Section 524 authorizes grants to and contracts with public and private agencies, institutions, or organizations for special planning and evaluation projects such as: